



FAMILY HEALTH



At This Year's Family Reunion, Food And Family Contribute More Than You Think

(NAPSA)—Each year, approximately 20 million Americans attend family reunions. They get together each year to enjoy one another's company, barbecue, eat Grandma's signature dessert and catch up on what's new. But, did you know that the food and family you love might also contribute to serious health problems like high cholesterol?

Aside from inheriting Nana's dimples or Dad's cleft chin, you may have also inherited their disposition for high cholesterol. That's right, your family health history may be the reason why, despite a healthy diet and regular exercise, you still have dangerously high cholesterol. Cholesterol comes from two sources—from the food you eat and from your family history. In fact, the majority of cholesterol is produced naturally in your body based upon family history.

According to the American Heart Association, nearly 105 million Americans have cholesterol above healthy levels—that's over half of the adult population in the United States. For many people, lifestyle changes, like diet and exercise, are not enough to reduce cholesterol to healthy levels. In many cases, people naturally produce too much cholesterol in their body, based upon their family his-

tory. These deposits cause the arteries to narrow and restrict blood flow, which can result in a heart attack or stroke.

According to current recommendations, people with coronary heart disease or others considered to be at high risk for coronary heart disease generally have an LDL cholesterol goal of less than 100 mg/dL. An LDL cholesterol goal of less than 70 mg/dL is a therapeutic option for people considered to be at very high risk. Work with your doctor to develop a plan to help reduce your LDL cholesterol number to goal.

Use your time wisely at this year's family reunion. In addition to catching up with your cousins, and sampling Grandma's apple pie, ask about the health history of your family members. Go to www.2sourcesofcholesterol.com/family and enter your family health information into an electronic Family Health Tree. This family tree is a useful tool to print out and take to your next doctor's visit to fully discuss your risk factors for cholesterol and heart health.

For more information about the two sources of cholesterol and available treatment options, visit www.2sourcesofcholesterol.com/family.